Losses due to private Courier Services

487. SHRI LAJPAT RAI:
Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) when the private courier services started in the country and whether the assistance of private courier services is regulated by Govenrment;

(b) if not, whether Government propose to conduct any survey with regard to number of private courier agencies operating in the country;

(c) whether Government have any data with regard to financial losses Government have suffered after introduction of such private services; and

(d) the measures Government proposed to take to ensure the efficient operation of its speed post and parcel services in respect of competition security and delivery vis-a-vis private services and regain its monopoly in operations?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) to (d) Exclusive privilege reserved to the Government under the provisions of Section 4 of the Indian Post Office Act, 1898, relates only to conveyance of letters and not to documents, parcels, etc. Hence, private couriers have been in operation since long.

The Department of Posts has taken the following measures to ensure efficient operation of speed post and parcel services:—

(i) Delivery through dedicated staff.
(ii) Mechanisation of delivery.
(iii) Free pick-up service from the customer's premises.
(iv) Computerisation of booking and delivery.
(v) Introduction of track and trace system.
(vi) Monitering of quality.

As a result of the above mentioned measures, the market share of speed post is growing over the years.

Electronic Exchanges in Maharashtra

488. SHRI SURYABHAN PATIL VAHADANE: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of electronic exchanges functioning in Maharashtra State, district-wise; and